

Welcome to the June newsletter! Here are this month's topics:

**New Topics:**

- Greetings from the U.S. Consulate General Shanghai
- Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures
- Election Basics – Are you Registered to Vote Absentee?
- The “Global Entry” Pilot Program – Expedited Entry into the U.S.
- Travel Alert: China
- E-mails Claiming to be from the IRS are Bogus
- Local News: Beijing Lays Down The Law For Visitors To Olympics
- New Website With Information For U.S. Students Abroad
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**Continuing Topics of Interest:**

- Summer Olympics and Paralympics in China
- Leaving Shanghai Consular District?
- China Earthquake Relief: How can I help?
- Links of Interest to Overseas Citizens

Greetings from the U.S. Consulate General Shanghai

Dear Fellow Americans,

The American Citizens Services section would like to thank our newest wardens for their commitment to service. In the event of a crisis, wardens play a major role in locating Americans, assisting those in need.

We are seeking additional wardens who are living in the Shanghai consular district. If you are interested please send an email to [shanghaiacs@state.gov](mailto:shanghaiacs@state.gov).

With the Chinese government publishing its rules for the Olympics (see page 4), foreigners are reminded to carry their passports with them while in China. Additionally, please be aware of your visa expiration date. Foreigners found to have an expired visa are subject to fines and possible detention. To apply for a Chinese visa your passport needs to have at least six months validity remaining and blank page for placement of the visa. The Consulate is happy to help you add additional pages to your passport at no cost.

Yours Truly,  
Shanghai ACS

**Upcoming Holidays and Other Closures**

Please remember that the days just before and just after a holiday are often extremely busy and you can expect significantly longer waiting times. If you visit us outside of these times, you should have a shorter wait.

The American Citizen Services Unit will be closed on the following days:

July 3, Thursday  
Close at 11:30 am

July 4, Friday  
Independence Day  
Closed ALL DAY

**Election Basics – Are you Registered to Vote Absentee?**

The Federal Post Card Application Form (FPCA; SF-76) is the first step of the absentee voting process. This form is

accepted by all states and territories as a simultaneous request for registration and/or an absentee ballot. The current version of the form is dated October 2005; however, the 1995 version of the form is still in circulation and remains a valid registration and absentee ballot request form.

U.S. Citizens voting under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) are eligible to participate in all elections for Federal offices in their state of legal residence. Many of these citizens are also eligible to vote in state and local elections as well.

Because election laws vary from state to state, we recommend you consult the 2008-2009 Voting Assistance Guide for specific information regarding your state's laws. The Voting Assistance Guide contains state-by-state procedures for UOCAVA citizens to register and/or request an absentee ballot using the FPCA. All shaded areas for your state or territory as indicated in the Voting Assistance Guide must be completed. The Guide is available on-line at the following website: <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag.html>

Please be aware that American citizens may mail all voting materials through the APO/FPO or diplomatic pouch; however, international mail is often much faster. Those wishing to send materials via diplomatic pouch should drop them off in the American Citizen Services section of the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate.

Voters using the online FPCA or FWAB, and those who are returning a ballot via U.S. postal channels (including APO/FPO or diplomatic pouch), may print out the attached prepaid mailing label and tape it to the outside of the envelope in order to take advantage of free postage.

#### **The “Global Entry” Pilot Program – Expedited Entry into the U.S.**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) began processing applications on May 12, 2008, for the Global Entry pilot program, which is designed to expedite the screening and processing of low-risk, frequent international travelers entering the United States.

Global Entry will be available for U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents who are frequent international travelers, provided they have not been found guilty of a criminal offense, charged with a customs or immigration offense, or declared inadmissible to the U.S. under immigration regulations. Biometric fingerprint technology will be used to verify the passenger's identity and confirm his or her status as a Global Entry participant.

The program will kick off on June 10, 2008, at three initial airports: John F. Kennedy Int'l Airport in New York; George Bush Int'l Airport in Houston; and Washington Dulles Int'l Airport.

Applications for enrollment in the Global Entry program are available through the Global On-Line Enrollment System (GOES) at <https://goes-app.cbp.dhs.gov/>

The Global Entry application process consists of three steps:

1. An applicant must complete and submit an online application through GOES and pay a \$100 fee through <https://www.pay.gov>
2. CBP officers will review the applicant's information and conduct a background investigation.
3. Finally, the applicant will undergo an interview with CBP officers at an Enrollment Center at JFK, Houston or Dulles Airports.

Upon returning from international travel, Global Entry-enrolled travelers may bypass the regular passport control line and proceed directly to the Global Entry kiosk. At the kiosk, the Global Entry traveler will activate the system by inserting his or her passport or U.S. permanent resident card into the document reader.

The kiosk will direct the traveler to electronically provide his or her fingerprints and will compare that biometric data with the fingerprint biometrics on file. A digital photograph will also be taken of the traveler as part of the transaction record.

Finally, the traveler will be prompted to answer several CBP declaration questions posted on the kiosk's touch-screen. Once the process is successfully completed, the traveler will be issued a transaction receipt which must be presented to the CBP officer as the participant leaves the CBP inspection area.

### **Travel Alert: China**

May 30, 2008

This Travel Alert updates U.S. citizens on the effects of the earthquake that struck China's Sichuan province on May 12. American citizens should avoid the areas of Sichuan province most severely affected by the earthquake and be prepared for travel delays in other parts of the province. Areas outside of Sichuan province are not experiencing earthquake-related damage or delays. This supersedes the Travel Alert dated May 16, 2008, and expires on June 30, 2008. Cities and towns to the north and northwest of Sichuan's provincial capital, Chengdu, are the areas most seriously damaged by the earthquake. These include Wenchuan County near the earthquake's epicenter, approximately 55 miles northwest of Chengdu, Beichuan, Dujiangyan, Mianzhu, Mianyang, and Maoxian. Rescue and recovery operations in this area are ongoing; infrastructure has been damaged, and road, air and rail transportation disrupted. Aftershocks continue to occur, causing further damage and complicating the significant rescue and recovery efforts now under way. Other areas of Sichuan province, such as the large metropolitan area of Chengdu, suffered less damage, but continue to experience light aftershocks, as well as delays in rail and airline service. Areas outside of Sichuan are not experiencing earthquake-related travel delays.

For information on earthquakes and earthquake preparedness, see [www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/earthquakes.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/earthquakes.html), and [www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/index.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/index.shtm).

Family members and friends unable to verify the safety and welfare of U.S. citizens in the affected area should call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada, or from other areas via a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. U.S. citizens in the area are urged to monitor the local news. Those residing or traveling in China are reminded to register with the U.S. Embassy or the closest U.S. Consulate, either online at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs> or in person at U.S. Embassy Beijing or at one of the following consulates:

U.S. Embassy Beijing: No. 2 Xiu Shui Dong Jie, Chaoyang District. tel: 86-10-6532-3431 Email: [amcitbeijing@state.gov](mailto:amcitbeijing@state.gov). Embassy's website: [beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn](http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn).

U.S. Consulate General Chengdu: Number 4, Lingshiguan Road, Section 4, Renmin Nanlu, Chengdu 610041, tel. 86-28-8558-3992 Email: [consularchengdu@state.gov](mailto:consularchengdu@state.gov).

U.S. Consulate General Guangzhou: The Consular Section is located at 5th Floor, Tianyu Garden (II phase), 136-146 Lin He Zhong Lu, Tianhe District, tel. (86-20) 8518-7605; Email: [GuangzhouACS@state.gov](mailto:GuangzhouACS@state.gov). Guangzhou adoptions Email: [GuangzhouA@state.gov](mailto:GuangzhouA@state.gov).

U.S. Consulate General Shanghai: The Consular Section is located in the Westgate Mall, 8th Floor, 1038 Nanjing Xi Lu, Shanghai 200041; tel. (86-21) 3217-4650, Email: [Shanghaiacs@state.gov](mailto:Shanghaiacs@state.gov).

U.S. Consulate General Shenyang: No. 52, 14th Wei Road, Heping District, Shenyang 110003; tel. (86-24) 2322-1198, Email: [ShenyangACS@state.gov](mailto:ShenyangACS@state.gov).

### **E-mails Claiming to be from the IRS are Bogus**

Please be aware that the IRS does not initiate taxpayer communications through email. Moreover, the IRS does not request detailed personal information through email, or ask taxpayers for any sensitive information such as personal identification numbers, passwords, or similar access information for credit cards or bank accounts.

Anyone receiving unsolicited email communication claiming to be from the IRS, please forward the original message to: [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov) and then follow the instructions given on the following website: <http://www.irs.gov/privacy/article/0,,id=179820,00.html>

There are reports of scammers contacting people via email that claim to require detailed personal information in order to receive the economic stimulus payment.

Please note that the economic stimulus payments are automatic for eligible taxpayers who filed a 2007 tax return; taxpayers do not need to take any additional action to receive the payment. For more detailed information and FAQs, please see the following website: <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=182735,00.html>

### **Local News: Beijing Lays Down The Law For Visitors To Olympics**

On June 2, the Beijing Olympics organizing committee, issued a detailed handbook on behavior by foreign visitors to this summer's Olympics. The 57 points addressed a range of behavior from public drunkenness to political statements. In recent months, the government has reported several attempted terrorist plots to disrupt the Games. It has also increased supervision of foreigners in China by tightening rules for issuing visas and checking up on foreign residents already inside the country.

Most of the guidelines issued Monday, are simply restatements of existing laws and regulations. They stipulate that foreign visitors to China should carry passports and other official documents at all times. Visitors staying with Chinese residents in urban areas must register with local police within 24 hours of arriving. The limit in rural areas is 72 hours. Don't plan for any late-night karaoke: Entertainment venues have to be closed by 2 a.m. Another guideline reminds visitors that "it is prohibited to sleep in public places," including airports, train stations and parks. The document is not immediately available in English, but is posted in Chinese at <http://www.beijing2008.cn/news/official/bulletin/official/n214387789.shtml>.

From Wall Street Journal Asia June 3, 2008 Geoffrey A. Fowler and Sky Canaves  
The Associated Press June 2, 2008 Stephen Wade

### **New Website With Information For U.S. Students Abroad**

The Department of State has launched a public affairs campaign that targets American citizen college students and young people studying and traveling internationally. The campaign is designed to promote safe, smart travel to college students and spring-breakers.

Through a new comprehensive website created for the campaign, <http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov>, the State Department offers college students a one-stop reference for international travel. The website offers country specific information, tips for safe travel, and other important information, such as who to contact if the student is victim of a crime; what to do in case of a natural disaster or emergency; where the nearest U.S. embassy is located; when to apply for a passport and visa; and how to vote in U.S. election from abroad.

### **Someone Asked the Consul: "What do I need to do to add pages to my daughter's passport?"**

Answer:

1. Her unexpired passport.
2. Her social security number.
3. A completed and signed form for adding pages available in our office at [http://shanghai.usembass.gov/adding\\_pages.html](http://shanghai.usembass.gov/adding_pages.html)
4. If she is 16 years or older she needs to give you a written authorization to add pages unless she comes with you. Barring unusual circumstances we can usually add pages in about 30 minutes.

[http://shanghai.usembassy.gov/adding\\_pages.html](http://shanghai.usembassy.gov/adding_pages.html)

### **Summer Olympics and Paralympics in China**

Are you planning to go to the Olympic Summer Games or the Beijing Paralympic Summer Games this summer? The Department of State has released a fact sheet that provides essential information for travel to China. Read the fact sheet carefully at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1762.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1762.html) and start preparations for your trip early.

### **Leaving Shanghai Consular District?**

If you are departing from Shanghai consular district after a long stay here, and you formally registered your stay with the U.S. consulate, please be sure to "cancel" your registration when you leave. You can deregister yourself by visiting the [travelregistration.state.gov](http://travelregistration.state.gov) site if you were previously registered through this site.

If you previously submitted your registration at the U.S. consulate, you may deregister yourself by sending an email request to [ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov).

### **China Earthquake Relief: How can I help?**

Since the devastating earthquake on May 12, 2008, many organizations have offered humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of those affected. Below are just a few organizations that are accepting donations in support of China Earthquake relief efforts, and this list does not reflect any particular endorsement by the U.S. Government:

Operation Blessing China: <http://www.obchina.org/>. A division of non-profit, parent organization, Operation Blessing International, has been operating humanitarian projects in China since 1999 through its coordination offices in Beijing, Lanzhou, Hong Kong, and Chengdu. Their programs include healthcare, surgical assistance, clean water, education, and disaster relief. Operation Blessing China through its office in Chengdu and in coordination with the Red Cross and the China Social Work Association has staff on the ground meeting the needs of the affected population.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: <http://ifrc.org>

The American Red Cross: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

The China Red Cross: <http://www.crcf.org.cn> More than 35,000 local Red Cross staff and volunteers have been working with rescue and medical teams to distribute tents, food, water, clothes and medicines around the clock. The Red Cross and Red Crescent efforts will target the most affected, paying special attention to special health and psycho-social needs of the most vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, pregnant mothers, the displaced and disabled, among others.

Network for Good:

<http://www.networkforgood.org/topics/international/earthquake/china080512.aspx?source=YAHOO&cmpgn=HMPCRS>

Network for Good offers links to several sites of organizations accepting donations for China Earthquake Relief and other disaster relief.

### *Additional Donation Information*

US Embassy Beijing weblink to the information below: <http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/public.html>

### *Public Donation Information*

The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for earthquake response efforts in China can be found at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org).

The U.S. encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.

We encourage people to donate to an organization of their choice. A list of organizations can be found at:

\* USAID: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) – Keyword: Donations

\* The Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org) or (703) 276-1914

\* Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)

### **Links of Interest to Overseas Citizens**

If you have difficulty accessing the official Federal Voting Assistance Program website, you may also try the following links to get voting information.

Association of Americans Resident Overseas (AARO)

<http://aaro.org/>

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas

<http://www.fawco.org/>

Expatriate Exchange

[www.expatechange.com/](http://www.expatechange.com/)

American Citizens Abroad (ACA)

<http://www.aca.ch/>

Overseas Vote Foundation

[www.overseasvotefoundation.org](http://www.overseasvotefoundation.org)

Democrats Abroad

Tel (202) 863-8177

Fax (202) 863-8063

[www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org)

[info@democratsabroad.org](mailto:info@democratsabroad.org)

Republicans Abroad

Tel: (202) 608-1423

Fax: (202) 608-1431

[www.republicansabroad.org](http://www.republicansabroad.org)

[chairman@republicansabroad.org](mailto:chairman@republicansabroad.org)

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